

HUMAN RESOURCES INVESTMENT COUNCIL
Wednesday, October 20, 2004
Killington Grand Hotel & Conference Center

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Tom Leever, HRIC; Gerald Brown, VCQ; Andrew Crossman, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; Frank McLaughlin for Maynard McLaughlin, Breadloaf Construction Corp.; David Nourse, Chittenden Bank; Frank Cioffi, GBIC; Neil Gruber, Helen Porter Healthcare; Phil Hammerslough, VABIR; John O’Kane, IBM; Richard Palmisano, Brattleboro Retreat; James Rude, James Consulting; Natalie Searle, CCV; Joyce Judy, CCV; Richard Flies, VTC Technology Extension Program for Robert Clarke, Vermont State Colleges; Pat Elmer, VT Associates; Anne Ginevan, DET; Richard Cate, Dept. of Education; Mike Quinn for Kevin Dorn, ACCD; Dan Van Der Vliet for Daniel Fogel, UVM; Carolyn Kehler for Donald Vickers, VSAC; Chris Kuhn, Northlands Job Corps Center; Roy Vestrich, United Professions of VT/AFT; Val Vincent, VT Legislature; and Hal Cohen, CVCAC.

Staff Present: Chip Evans, Executive Director and Denise Bergeron, Administrative Assistant, HRIC.

HRIC Interested Parties and Guests Present: Cynthia Tokos, Project Consultant, LLC; Tracy Steen, Northlands Job Corps Center; Nancy Burzon, Rutland WIB; Patricia King, Addison County Business Education Partnership; Eric Peterson, Central Vermont WIB; Richard LeVitre for Doug Lantagne, UVM.

Welcome and Introductions:

Tom Leever, Chair of the Human Resources Investment Council called the meeting to order at 9:00am and welcomed the HRIC members and guests. Tom stated, “the scene was well set yesterday by guest speaker, Joe Stoltz, Regional Administrator for Employment & Training, US Department of Labor/ETA Region 1-Boston, who spoke on globalization at the Workforce Investment Board Retreat”.

Approval of Minutes:

Tom asked for a motion to accept the June 17, 2004 meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were accepted as written. Tom reported that he and Chip had met with Mark Young recently at his request. They briefed him on what the HRIC is and does. He invited us to hold our winter meeting in Montpelier with his committee and others. No dates have been set yet. We are looking at the first week in February. Tom stated that we would keep the members informed.

Updates on Sector Reports: Information Technology

Chip Evans, Executive Director reported that the HRIC Information Technology report has been printed. He commented that the report should be an asset to Economic Growth in the State. Anyone who would like to talk more about the report or arrange a presentation should contact Chip at 802-828-4156. The IT Report will also be posted on the HRIC website www.hric.state.vt.us where it can be downloaded in pdf. Format.

Representative Vincent inquired about indicator 4B that proposes to measure the number of State employees who’s IT skills are evaluated each year. Chip explained that State Government is one of the largest employers in the State, and that many functions of Government are data and information driven. Investments in IT training for the State workforce will improve State services and as a purchaser of training services the State could also help increase the availability of training for other citizens. The first step, which item 4.b recommends, would be to do an assessment perhaps through Community College of Vermont who has an online testing site. Discussion followed about the importance of computer skills as a part of Education and members wondered if our telecommunications infrastructure and education infrastructures are competitive with other States.

Updates on Sector Reports: Healthcare

Tom Leever stated that the Council’s Healthcare Workforce Committee has been very active. They have decided to focus first on Healthcare jobs where there is a 10% vacancy or higher rate turnover

and job vacancy. They have identified twenty healthcare positions that met this criterion. Discussion followed on how to recruit students into Healthcare education and training programs. Currently, the Nursing schools are at capacity, but even this will not meet the expected demand. Tom noted that Rep. Val Vincent, Richard Palmisano, and he had been very active on the committee, and also had broad participation. Rick stated that the outcome is quite impressive. Rick wanted to acknowledge the involvement and great support from the Department of Employment and Training. Travelers are expensive and that we need more Vermont nurses in hospitals. Tom asked, “what’s next”? Act 53 required a broad study of Healthcare, of which the human resource aspect is just on part. Rick commented that we have good, hard data now, which should drive capacity. He also pointed out that this subject will require continued study and attention from this Committee. Neil Gruber commented that each community hospital is doing it’s own needs assessment, but that this is not aggregated statewide. John O’Kane offered the following comments and questions; “We are talking about filling the demand. What are the health needs and priorities of the Health Re-allocation Plan, do you have adequate personnel, how to find the people to provide the services? John stated, “there need to be report cards on a community’s need, and the extent to which it is being met”.

Vermont’s Workforce Challenge:

HRIC Vision and Mission – Tom Leever circulated a draft handout titled, HRIC Workforce Challenge Statement. John O’Kane, began by reading a few lines from an article he read last week in the Wall Street Journal. He stated that both this article and Joe Stoltz talk about worker shortages. The United States produces on tenth of the Engineers that China produces. Off shoring happens not just because of low wages in other countries. Now it is also being driven by the availability of better skills overseas. The jobs we lose in this way are unlikely to come back. The quality of the workforce and education in some worker categories is better in Singapore than in the United States.

Discussion followed, and comments included, the need to find partners and coalitions to improve Education and Workforce going forward, the serious challenge to the economic future of the US, and that while education systems in other countries often do produce excellent result, there are strengths to our system that do not show up in test scores.

Discussion of the Challenge Statement:

The task was to review and suggest modifications of the HRIC’s Draft Key Message, beginning with comment on what members liked and wanted to keep, followed by identification of concepts that might need to be added. Finally, the Council discussed what audiences need to hear the message and how the message should be delivered.

It was agreed by consensus of those present that the basic message is sound and necessary and that the Council should proceed.

Strengths of Draft Document:

Document is good - very clear

Draft paper – keep is short

Draft paper clearly defines the challenge

Consequences are described

Conveys sense of urgency – action

Quality of workforce relates to our economic future

VT must compete on the basis of our workforce

Importance of all sectors collaborating and working in alignment

Concept of lifelong learning

Action oriented

VT must compete on basis of workforce not just scenery

Addresses manufacturing base

Students responsibility to make things/education happen

There are people who believe college is not right for them. Some want to go right to work. 4th paragraph is inclusive of this.

A high quality workforce more than basic knowledge

The statement that VT is part of global market
Includes social skills
The benefit is more than jobs; it is quality of life

Possible Additional Concepts to Add:

Capacity for innovation and creativity
Public/private partnerships and investment to allow and support this
Adaptability of workers, flexible workforce for emerging technologies
Creative skills, critical skills, and adaptability of skills
Access to Technical training resources
Many jobs can be done elsewhere. Which? (Statement needs to be stronger)
VT companies have potential for growth but often constrained by the workforce in place
VT has a competitive advantage because we are smaller
Access to research

Who needs to hear the message?

Individual citizens have to buy into this
HRIC member organizations, public and private
Political leadership at all levels
School Boards – State and local level
Labor leaders
Guidance counselors, mentors, advisors
Media gatekeepers – Editorial boards
Business organizations, AGC, Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce, GBIC
Foundations with potential for investing in VT
Chambers of Commerce, Rotaries
Youth
All educators K-16 and beyond
Workforce Investment Boards
Freeman Foundation and the like
Opinion and thought leaders
Those of traditional view of education
Parents, students, teachers, grassroots
Parents, child, pediatrician, grandparents
Political parties – All of them – make the message part of their platforms
Town meetings

How to deliver the message?

Utilize the HRIC membership and its connections
Need to engage people in a dialogue
Tell the story in different ways – Give examples
Need both start-up strategy and long term strategy
Message needs to be carried by employers

Next steps: Success will require consensus on strategies and objectives.

Step 1 Paper gets discussion going. HRIC takes the initiative to say, “this is a problem” can you get on board?

Step 2 Use this draft as a vehicle to get conversation started in a positive way.

Other Comments:

Micro-economic development
How to deliver Higher Education to all 600,000 Vermonters?
Many Vermonters have the potential to achieve Higher Education even though they did not go to college right after High School.
Greater employee involvement
Identification of what the specific gaps are and what we are trying to close today

Commitment by leaders at HRIC table to make sure this happens
How is the VT way of life defined?
Missing indicators
Tax policy – sectorial strategies – strong link
Statistics – how to help students with pathways – Paragraph 4
How do we guarantee that skilled workforce stays here?
Opportunities have been passed up because of lack of trained workforce
Benchmarks and Data
Define VT way of life
Rethink the way we deliver college education to existing workforce
Greater employer involvement in system
ID the gap in VT we are trying to close (now and future) with data
Align tax policy with workforce training system
Provide multiple pathways for students to acquire skills

Next Steps:

Several HRIC members and others volunteered to serve on a committee to produce a new draft. Phil Hammerslough, Jerry Brown, James Rude, Richard Cate, Rep. Val Vincent, John O'Kane, Tom Leever, Mike Quinn, Tracy Steen and Chip Evans.

Strategic Plan Activity Reports:

3.9 Qualify for WIA Incentive Grants – DET

Anne Ginevan passed out a handout titled, PY 2003 WIA Performance, and noted that the program was quite successful this year, meeting all but one indicator, and that we will concentrate more on these groups. Adult, Youth, and Dislocated workers in the future. Anne noted in the handout that the last column compares us to the performance of the New England region. The State's poorest performance was the participation/satisfaction evaluation. Anne stated that DET has had trouble getting completed surveys returned, although the results of the ones they do get are positive. We do not know if Vermont will be eligible for an incentive grant this year. It depends on the performance of the Department of Ed programs.

Tom Leever asked HRIC members to please fill out their evaluation forms.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30